

Scriabin and Plato's Musical Mysticism

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*For María Sánchez Puig and Svetlana Maliavina,
with affection and thankfulness.*

I. Prefatory Action

In this paper I am going to deal with what is said about music in the literary sketches of a musician, the genial and visionary Russian composer and renowned pianist Aleksander Scriabin (1872-1915). As it is well known, during his last years Scriabin worked intently on planning a large "total art work" (*Gesamtkunstwerk* is the standard German term for that), the unfinished *Мистерия* (*Mystery*), which would have united music, poetry, dance, drama, scents, lights, and caresses, in order to act upon all human senses. I shall focus on the libretto for the *Предварительное действие* or *Prefatory Action*, sketched as an introduction to that *Мистерия*. Through the text of the *Предварительное действие*, I shall try to reconstruct Scriabin's thought about music, and to point out its affinities with the philosophy of music developed by Plato and other ancient philosophers.¹

II. The Sounds of Cosmogony

The poem of the *Предварительное действие* describes the origins of the universe, the emergence of masculine and feminine principles (represented by the images of lightning and wave), the creatures' coming to life, the progressive fall of human kind into the abyss of evil, and the birth of a 'prophet' whose sacrifice brings redemption

* Cf. a first Spanish version of this paper in MOLINA MORENO, 2004. The information provided about ancient Greek philosophy and mythology of music is part of the results of a research conducted during the years 1999-2001, funded by a postdoctoral grant awarded by the Comunidad de Madrid, Spain, and during the years 2003-2005, funded by another postdoctoral grant awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports (ref. ID-2002-0002).

1. Scriabin wrote two versions of the first part of his poem (cf. resp. SCRIBIN, 1913-14, 202-215 and 235-47), but he did not revise the second part. We shall, however, use the first unrevised version of the first part of the poem, the contents of which makes better sense with that of the unrevised second part. The slight modifications introduced by Scriabin in the revised version of the first part would have required further changes in the second part, which he had no time to revise.

to Humanity.² In quite a self-effacing way, Scriabin identified himself with that prophet,³ who would lead his listeners to a purifying ecstasy through the artwork for the introduction of which he sketched this poem.⁴ In the first strophes, it can be observed that sound and light are the primal phenomena that take place in the history of the Universe:

В этом взлёте, в этом взрыве
В этом молнийном порыве
В огневом его дыхании
Вся поэма мироздания.
И миг любви рождает вечность
И пространства глубину
Мирами дышет бесконечность
Объедают звоны тишины.⁵

In this flight, in this thunder,
In this lightning impulse,
In its fiery breathing
Is the whole poem of the world's creation.
A moment of love sires eternity
And the depths of space;
Infinity breathes worlds,
Chimes envelop the silence.⁶

As we can see, "the whole poem of world's creation" began with lightning and thunder. First of all, eternity and depths of space came into being; then "chimes envelop silence." Sounds being present since the starting moments of cosmic history, the whole Universe has an acoustic nature that is alluded to in several passages of Scriabin's poem.

III. Cosmic Music and its Seductive Power

Some strophes later, the voice of the feminine principle mentions "the harmonious choirs of the worlds" (хоры стройные миров⁷). Now we can remember that in ancient Greece, a choral performance included both singing and dancing, since there was no separation between music and dance as we understand these arts.⁸ Thereafter

2. Cf. MATLAW, 1979, p. 20: "Embodiments of ideas that would trace the history of mankind as the process of distribution and immersion of the Spirit into matter and the counter-return to unity, a process of cosmic evolution and involution (Русские пропилеи, 1919, стр. 114). "The theme of the *Action* is the creation of the world through the act of love and the dissolution of that world in an ecstasy of love into a new unity."

3. Vid. SRIABIN, 1900 ff., 129.

4. Vid. VERDI, 1991, 108-9. Thanks to Prof. Luigi Verdi, who kindly submitted the relevant passages of his book, no longer available, by e-mail (October 31st 2005).

5. Vid. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 202. In our citations we keep the punctuation (or lack of punctuation) of that edition; punctuation marks also lack in Scriabin's manuscripts. This can be due to their being sketches or to an influence of futurism.

The revised version reads:

В молнийном взлёте, грозном взрыве
В любовном творческом порыве,
В его божественном дыхании
Лик сокровенный мироздания.
Мгновенья пыл рождает вечность,
Лучит пространства глубину;
Мирами дышет бесконечность,
Объяли звоны тишину.

In lightning flight, in awesome explosion,
In loving creative impulse,
In its divine breathing
Is the hidden face of the created world.
The heat of the moment sires eternity.
And illuminates the depths of space;
Infinity breathes worlds,
Chimes have enveloped the silence.

Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 235, and the transl. by MORRISON, 2002, 313.

6. Transl. by the author, on the ground of Simon Morrison's translation of the revised version, cited in the previous note.

7. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 204.

8. Cf. the fourth century B. C. E. music theorist Aristoxenus, in PIGHI, 1959, 27: "Things that may be put into rhythmical patterns are three: language, music, and bodily movement. Thus, language will distribute time among its own parts (that is, letters, syllables, phrases, and all the like); music, among its sounds and intervals; movement, among gestures, postures, and whatever part of the movement there may be in addition."

the imagination of poets and philosophers in human society, and the notion of the first cause." The first cause." We shall later

Since sound and light had been present since the beginning of the poem, Scriabin's hymn of light, in which ether and inaccessible heavens:

Сей храм - как свет
Эфир наполнен

Что дышит

This cathedral is like a
The ether
That takes

These verses make us recall the "harmony of the spheres." According to Aristotle, that the stars, when moving through the ether (when moving at high velocity) produce sounds corresponding to sounds produced by heavenly bodies. Aristotle attributed such speculation to the Pythagoreans. In ancient Greece, music, in ancient Greece, is told by Plato at the end of the *Timaeus*, "the realm of Er," told by Plato at the end of the *Timaeus*, the realms is presented, according to Plato, the hemispheres fit into one another and sing.¹⁵ Plato did not specify the structure of the heavens, but, in the second of his *Timaeus*, the celestial Sirens in Plato's myth, the souls of the dead with the Sirens, the heavenly abode.¹⁶

9. Cf. MILLER, 1986.

10. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 204.

11. Пляска - первая причина; cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 215.

12. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 215.

13. MORRISON, 2002, 326.

14. Cf. Aristotle, *On Heavens*, 290b-291a.

15. Plato, *Republic*, 617b.

16. Vid. Plutarch, *Table Talk*, IX, 14.

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the imagination of poets and philosophers transferred to the stars such state of things
in human society, and the notion of a cosmic dance was current in, and not limited to,
ancient Greek and Latin literature.⁹ Scriabin also alluded to the dance of all the stars
(танец всезвездный¹⁰), and in another passage of the libretto we can read: "Dance is
the first cause."¹¹ We shall later assess the implications of this statement.

Since sound and light had been the first phenomena in the cosmogony sketched at
the beginning of the poem, Scriabin compared the Universe with a starry temple and a
hymn of light, in which ether reverberates with golden sounds that take souls into the
inaccessible heavens:

Сей храм - как светлый гимн, сей мир - как звездный храм
Эфи́р наполнен золотым зазывным звоном
Что души емлет к недоступным небесам.¹²

This cathedral is like a bright hymn, this world is like a starry cathedral
The ether reverberates with a golden summons
That takes souls into the inaccessible heavens.¹³

These verses make us remember the ancient Greek doctrine of the so-called
"harmony of the spheres." According to Aristotle, the followers of Pythagoras believed
that the stars, when moving through the sky, produce sounds (as whatever body does
when moving at high velocity). Since the numerical relationships between the velocities
of the heavenly bodies seemed to coincide with those between the string lengths
corresponding to sounds bound by perfect consonances, it was thought that the
sounds produced by heavenly bodies were musically consonant as well.¹⁴ But, before
Aristotle attributed such speculations to the Pythagoreans, the first allusion to heavenly
music, in ancient Greece, is to be found in an account about the Other World: the "myth
of Er," told by Plato at the end of his *Republic*. In this myth, a vision of the heavenly
realms is presented, according to which the universe is made up from eight
hemispheres fit into one another, and on the edge of each of them a Siren sits and
sings.¹⁵ Plato did not specify the function of the Sirens' song in his description of
heavens, but, in the second century C. E., Plutarch explained the role played by the
celestial Sirens in Plato's myth of Er: according to Plutarch, the Sirens' song entices
the souls of the dead with the love of divine things and leads them towards their
heavenly abode.¹⁶

9. Cf. MILLER, 1986.

10. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 204.

11. Пляска - первая причина; cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 233.

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13. MORRISON, 2002, 326.

14. Cf. Aristotle, *On Heavens*, 290b-291a.

15. Plato, *Republic*, 617b.

16. Vid. Plutarch, *Table Talk*, IX, 14, 6, 2, 745 d8 - e3.

On the other side, the ancient writers also imagined that the Muses were associated with stars or with heavenly regions and were responsible for the music of the spheres.¹⁷ And it is also very interesting that the Muses had the same soteriological function that Plutarch ascribed to the Platonic Sirens: the Neoplatonic philosopher Proclus (fifth century C. E.) wrote that the Muses purify the souls with their song and teach the souls how to proceed, being pure, towards the stars allotted to them.¹⁸ All these notions were already hinted at by Plato, who suggested that music owes its cathartic power to its being an imitation of cosmic harmony, and attributed to the Muses the origin of harmony, both in the macrocosmos and in the individual.¹⁹ Now Scriabin seems to have been a loyal follower of Plato, Plutarch, and Proclus, when he wrote that the golden sounds of the ether take the souls into the inaccessible heaven.

The music of the universe is also alluded to in a later part of the sketches, when the "prophet" announces to the human kind that he will reveal his liberating truth:

Смертные, вам я поведаю тайны небесных гармоний
Да раздаются гимны и славы на солнечной лире!²⁰

Mortals, I will reveal to you the secret of celestial harmonies
May hymns and praises sound on the sun lyre!²¹

This reference to the sun lyre is not isolated in the poem, as we shall see, and deserves some remarks. The ancient Greeks associated the Sun with Apollo since the fifth century B. C. E.: for example, Aeschylus suggests that association in *Seven against Thebes*, when he mentions "the unseen land where Apollo does not walk, the sunless land that receives all men."²² On the other side, Apollo was the god of music *par excellence* in the ancient Greek pantheon, and his instrument was the lyre, as many literary and iconographic sources attest.²³ Most importantly, Plato imagined Apollo as the god who conducts the music of the spheres, in the *Cratylus*. Speculating about possible etymologies of the name "Apollo," Socrates says:

And with reference to music we have to understand that alpha often signifies "together," and here it denotes moving together in the heavens about the poles, as we call them, and

17. Vid., among many other sources, Plutarch, *Table Talk*, IX, 14, 3, 745a-c, and *On the soul's generation in Plato's 'Timaeus'*, 1029d, and Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras*, 31.

18. Proclus, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, in KROLL, 1899-1901, 2, 68, and *Hymn No. 3*, vv. 6-8.

19. For the cathartic power of music being due to the harmony of the spheres, cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 47 b-d; for the Muses as source of harmony, cf. Plato, *Tim.*, 47 d.

20. SCRIBIN, 1913-14, 217.

21. MORRISON, 2002, 329.

22. Cf. Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes*, vv. 859-60, transl. by Herbert Weir Smyth, quoted from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0014&layout=&loc=859>, as consulted on July 7, 2005. For a discussion of other sources, cf. FARNELL, 1907, 136-144, and 366-7; BOYANCÉ, 1936, 94, and 1966, and MOREAU, 1996.

23. Cf., among many other sources, Homer, *Iliad*, I, vv. 602 ff.: *Thus the whole day long till the setting of the sun they feasted, nor did their heart lack anything of the equal feast, nor of the beauteous lyre, which Apollo sings, nor yet of the Muses, who sang, replying one to the other with sweet voices* (trans. by A. T. Murray, slightly modified, quoted from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0134&layout=&loc=1.600>, as consulted on July 7, 2005).

harmony in song, which astronomers tell us, all the directs the harmony, making just as we call the *homokela* changing the *homo* to *alpha* *Homopolo*, and the second disaster (*apolô*, *apolôla*, et

Two passages of the so-called present both the Sun and Apollo. *Hymn Nr. 8* invokes "the Sun the universe,"²⁵ and, in the *Orphic seasons with his lyre*: "Thou d highest ones."²⁶ It is highly surprising that he conceived the roughly seventeen centuries discussed in a later section of

IV. The Origins of H

Let's return now to Scriabin's liberating truth, the next stro

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24. Cf. Plato, *Cratylus*, 405c-d (trans. bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0014&layout=&loc=405c-d, as consulted on July 7, 2005). T

25. Cf. *Orphic Hymn Nr. 8*, v. 10, tr

26. Cf. *Orphic Hymn Nr. 34*, v. 22,

27. Cf. SCRIBIN, 1913-14, 217.

28. Cf. MORRISON, 2002, 329.

29. Cf. SCRIBIN, 1913-14, 217-8.

30. Cf. MORRISON, 2002, 329.

that the Muses were associated for the music of the spheres.¹⁷ The soteriological function that the Platonic philosopher Proclus (fifth century) attributed to their song and teach the souls of the spheres.¹⁸ All these notions were given its cathartic power to its association with the Muses the origin of the spheres.¹⁹ Now Scriabin seems to have been when he wrote that the golden spheres of the spheres.

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poem, as we shall see, and the Sun with Apollo since the association in *Seven against the Giants* does not walk, the sunless was the god of music *par excellence* was the lyre, as many times, Plato imagined Apollo as the *Cratylus*. Speculating about

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the whole day long till the setting of the sun of the beautiful lyre, which Apollo plays sweet voices (trans. by A. T. Murray, *Cratylus*, 405c-d (transl. by Harold N. Fowler, quoted from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0172;query=section%3D%23112;layout=;loc=Crat.%20405d>, as consulted on July 7, 2005). The words *apolô*, *apolôla* are forms of the verb *apôllumi*, meaning "to kill."

harmony in song, which is called concord; for, as the ingenious musicians and astronomers tell us, all these things move together by a kind of harmony. And this god directs the harmony, making them all move together, among both gods and men; and so, just as we call the *homokeleuthon* (him who accompanies), and *homokoitin* (bedfellow), by changing the *homo* to *alpha*, *akolouthon* and *akoitin*, so also we called him *Apollo* who was *Homopolo*, and the second *lambda* was inserted, because without it the name sounded of disaster (*apolô*, *apolôla*, etc.).²⁴

Two passages of the so-called *Orphic Hymns*, written in the second century C. E., present both the Sun and Apollo ruling the cosmos with the help of a lyre: the *Orphic Hymn Nr. 8* invokes "the Sun of the golden lyre, who drives the harmonious course of the universe,"²⁵ and, in the *Orphic Hymn Nr. 34*, Apollo rules the succession of the year's seasons with his lyre: "Thou distinguish winter with the lowest notes, summer with the highest ones."²⁶ It is highly doubtful that Scriabin could know these texts, and it is surprising that he conceived the image of the Sun's lyre on his own, as the ancients did roughly seventeen centuries before him. The problem of Scriabin's sources will be discussed in a later section of this paper.

IV. The Origins of Humanity

Let's return now to Scriabin's poem. After the prophet's announcement of his liberating truth, the next strophe reads like if it were to be recited by the narrator:

Люди, ища разрешенных созвучий им чуждых касаются струн.²⁷

The people, searching for consonant sonorities, touch the strings that are alien to them.²⁸ Obviously, the "consonant sonorities" are a metaphor for "truth," which makes sense with the acoustic nature of the universe, as it has been described in the previous strophes. And the people who search for truth, but do not find it, can be described as touching wrong strings, which are not in harmony with human kind ("alien to them," according to the poem).

The following verses might be recited by those people who "searches for consonant sonorities," that is, for truth about their lives:

Что сверканьем зарниц,
Что игрой чаровниц
В дыме наших темниц
Нас повергнуло ниц?²⁹

What with a flash of lightning,
What in a conjuror's act
In the smoke of our purgatories
Has prostrated us?³⁰

24. Cf. Plato, *Cratylus*, 405c-d (transl. by Harold N. Fowler, quoted from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0172;query=section%3D%23112;layout=;loc=Crat.%20405d>, as consulted on July 7, 2005). The words *apolô*, *apolôla* are forms of the verb *apôllumi*, meaning "to kill."

25. Cf. *Orphic Hymn Nr. 8*, v. 10, transl. by the author.

26. Cf. *Orphic Hymn Nr. 34*, v. 22, transl. by the author.

27. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 217.

28. Cf. MORRISON, 2002, 329.

29. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 217-8.

30. Cf. MORRISON, 2002, 329.

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DIEHL, 1903-6, I, 316, lines 16-26). It is
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Indeed, time and space are required for the differentiation by means of which the primordial oneness gives way to multiplicity. In this context, the emergence of sound and light alluded to in the verses about cosmogony and in those about anthropogony, may be interpreted as metaphors of the individuation process. Thus, the account about the origin of human kind follows the same pattern as that about the origin of the universe.

On the other hand, one of the first consequences of time and space is movement, and Scriabin might have had in mind these notions when he wrote that "dance is the first cause," as we saw above.³⁸ Stating that dance is the first cause is a metaphor for the primeval character of movement, and Scriabin had accordingly put a specific kind of movement, a "flight" at the very beginning of his cosmogony, even before the primordial thunder and lightning:

В этом взлёте, в этом взрыве
В этом молнийном порыве
В огневом его дыхании
Вся поэма мироздания.³⁹

In this flight, in this thunder,
In this lightning impulse,
In its fiery breathing
Is the whole poem of the world's creation.⁴⁰

Although there are hardly any scarce and not very meaningful references to sonic phenomena in ancient Greek cosmogonies,⁴¹ certain Greek thinkers made clear the relationships between movement, generation, and sound: the Pythagorean philosopher Archytas (fourth century B. C. E.) stated that, for anything to be heard, there must be first movement and beat. This doctrine was repeated in the so-called *Canon's division* (a treatise about acoustics attributed to the mathematician Euclides), and Plato, himself a friend of Archytas, mentioned it in his *Timaeus*. Last, but not least, the Jewish Hellenistic philosopher Philo of Alexandria (25 B. C. E. – 50 C. E.), in a passage full of Pythagorean echoes, wrote that generation is only possible with movement.⁴² These considerations may offer a clue to explain the parallelism between three oppositions in Scriabin's cosmogony:

Rest	Movement (flight)
Silence	Sound (thunder)
Unity	Multiplicity ⁴³

38. Танец – первая причина ; cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 233. Vid. also Scriabin's reflections about vibration as the basis of all phenomena, in SRIABIN, 1905-6, 181-2, and cf. VERDI, 1991, 75-7.

39. Vid. SRIABIN, 1913-1914, 202. The revised version reads:

В молнийном взлёте, грозном взрыве	In lightning flight, in awesome explosion,
В любовном творческом порыве,	In loving creative impulse,
В его божественном дыхании	In its divine breathing
Лик сокровенный мироздания.	Is the hidden face of the created world.

Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 235, and the transl. by MORRISON, 2002, 313.

40. Transl. by the author, on the ground of Simon Morrison's translation of the revised version, quoted in the previous note.

41. We shall briefly deal with this question in a later section.

42. For Archytas's doctrine, vid. DIELS, 1951, vol. I, 431-5, esp. 432 and 433 (= Archytas, 47 B 1; English transl. by BARKER, 1989, 40); cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 67b, and Euclides, in JAN, 1895, 148 = BARKER, 1989, 191. For Philo of Alexandria's connection between movement and generation, cf. his *De opificio mundi*, 100, in COHN, 1896, 34, and COLSON-WHITAKER, 1962, 81.

43. Although the separation of colors within a white beam is indeed another metaphor for the transition from singularity to multiplicity, it was not mentioned in the cosmogony of the first strophes of the poem, but only in those about the origin of human beings.

It is very interesting to observe that the appropriateness of sound as a metaphor of movement was pointed out by an illustrious Russian symbolist writer, a contemporary of Scriabin, Andrey Bely: "Music contains the essence of movement. In the whole infinity of existing worlds, this essence is one and the same. The essence that connects those worlds is expressed by means of music. [...] In music, we are unconsciously directing our hearing to that essence."⁴⁴

V. Cosmic Dissonance and Its Resolution

Given those "myths" about the presence of sound at the origin of the world and of the human being, the notion of disharmony makes a good metaphor to describe conflict and disturbance. Accordingly, in a later part of the sketches, entitled "Песня – пляска падших" ("Song-Dance of the Fallen"), the individuals who have fallen into the chaos of lower passions can say:

Песням неба, нам докучным
наши песни не созвучны.⁴⁵

Our songs are not consonant
With the songs of heaven, which are
tedious to us.⁴⁶

There is, however, a nobler part of human soul, which stays attuned to celestial harmony. This is the eternal feminine principle, which (who) introduces itself (herself?) with these words:

Я в храме души твоей сладость созвучия
О небе поющих воскрыльями снов.⁴⁷

In the cathedral of your soul I am the sweetness of consonance,
Of dreams that sing of heaven on wings.⁴⁸

In the last verse, translating *воскрыльями* as "on wings" yields a rhythmically polished line, but we would prefer the more literal rendering of *воскрыльями* as "with their wings," which would make these personified singing dreams resemble to mythical beings whose vocal organs were their wings, and who acted as attendants of divinities: such attendants were the *cherubim* of Ezechiel's vision, and the swans of Apollo, using their wings to sing hymns to their god.⁴⁹ It makes good sense for the eternal feminine principle, as the noblest part of the human soul, to be imagined as a winged being, as if it were an attendant of the divinity. On the other hand, these singing winged dreams of

44. BUGAEV, 1902, 357.

45. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 221.

46. Transl. by MORRISON, 2002, 332.

47. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 225.

48. Transl. by MORRISON, 2002, 337.

49. For the *cherubim* of Ezechiel's vision, cf. *Ez.*, 1, 24 ("And when they went I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters. And when they stopped, their wings stopped"), and *Ez.*, 3, 13; for the swans of Apollo, cf. *Homeric Hymn Nr. 21*, v. 1 ("Phoebus, the swan certainly sings you with its wings in clear tone"), and Aristophanes, *Birds*, vv. 769-72 ("So the swans on the banks of the Hebrus, tiotiotiotiotinx, mingle their voices to serenade Apollo, tiotiotiotinx, flapping their wings."). Transl. by E. O'Neill, Jr., quoted from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.0.1.0026&layout=&loc=769>, as consulted on November 22nd 2005.

the higher part of the soul bring this is the other antecedent of graphy, and it was not too difficult dreams, as they were in the case a feature of supernatural being

To return to Scriabin's p consonance," music (both hu such cathartic power of musi notorious defenders were th seems to have said that th medicine, and the purification century C. E.) explains that the music of the spheres with

(15.64) Considering that human beings, as when c rhythms or melodies, he first one, by means of ce tempers and passions ca gathered together as the ailments of the body and that deserves our comm above mentioned music devising mixtures of dia easily circularly led into irrationally came into be

50. We might interpret as souls th (a soul-leading god, according *lékythos* from the mid-fifth cent XI; for Hermes as a soul-leadin

51. Although there is no mention mythical representations of co

a) In the first allusion to cosmic in the so-called "myth of Er" represented as birds with hu 617b, and, among many oth Paris (Musée du Louvre, Inv

b) Last, some important heav ancients: for example, the H Moon"; Critias alluded to th Ion endowed the planet Ven cf. respectively *Homeric Hy* 1967, 385, and Euripides, *Io*

52. Vid. Aristoxenus, fr. 26, in W and Quintilianus, IX, 4, 12.

53. That is, Pythagoras.

54. A musical harmony was hel *Republic*, 443 c-d; Plutarch, *A KROLL*, 1899-1901, I, 212-3.

ness of sound as a metaphor of
ymbolist writer, a contemporary
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ame. The essence that connects
n music, we are unconsciously

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he origin of the world and of the
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es, entitled "Песня – пляска
who have fallen into the chaos

are not consonant
ongs of heaven, which are
o us.⁴⁶

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y went I heard the sound of their
ings stopped"), and *Ez.*, 3, 13; for
certainly sings you with its wings
s on the banks of the Hebrus,
flapping their wings."). Transl. by
xt?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.0

the higher part of the soul bring to our mind the image of the soul as a winged creature⁵⁰: this is the other antecedent of Scriabin's winged and singing dreams in ancient iconography, and it was not too difficult to take the wings as the vocal organ of those singing dreams, as they were in the case of the *cherubim* and of Apollo's swans: the wings being a feature of supernatural beings, they made good vocal organs for supernatural voices.⁵¹

To return to Scriabin's poem. If the highest part of the soul is "sweetness of consonance," music (both human and celestial) could purify the listener. The belief in such cathartic power of music was widely accepted among the ancients, and its most notorious defenders were the Pythagoreans: Aristoxenus (fourth century B. C. E.) seems to have said that they practiced the purification of the body by means of medicine, and the purification of the soul by means of music,⁵² and Iamblichus (fourth century C. E.) explains that Pythagoras purified the souls of his disciples by imitating the music of the spheres with the help of his lyre and his singing:

(15.64) Considering that the care presented through perception is the first one for the human beings, as when one perceives beautiful figures or forms, or listens to beautiful rhythms or melodies, he⁵³ established by himself the instruction through music as the first one, by means of certain tunes and rhythms, from which remedies for the human tempers and passions came into being, and harmonies of the faculties of the soul⁵⁴ were gathered together as they were from the beginning, and remissions and healings of the ailments of the body and the soul were invented by him. And, by Zeus, what is beyond all that deserves our comment, because he put in order together and arranged himself the above mentioned musical arrangements and treatments for his pupils, marvellously devising mixtures of diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic tunes, by means of which he easily circularly led into a contrary direction the passions of the soul which newly and irrationally came into being or were developing in them, and turned them round to their

50. We might interpret as souls the little winged human creatures rising from a *pithos* near which Hermes (a soul-leading god, according to ancient belief) stands with his caduceus on a white-figured Attic *lékythos* from the mid-fifth century B. C. E. (now in the Museum of Jena; cf. MARÓT, 1960, 136, and pl. XI; for Hermes as a soul-leading god, cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, I, 24: "Hermes Kyllenios invoked the souls").

51. Although there is no mention of their sound, the wings are also present to a certain degree in the mythical representations of cosmic music, and in the iconography of some heavenly bodies:

a) In the first allusion to cosmic music in ancient Greek literature (that of Plato at the end of his *Republic*, in the so-called "myth of Er"), such heavenly music is sung by winged beings: the Sirens, who were represented as birds with human (mostly female) busts and heads, in ancient art. Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 617b, and, among many other specimens, an Attic-Corinthian hydria of ca. 580-550 B. C. E., now in Paris (Musée du Louvre, Inv. No. E 869; vid. BUSCHOR, 1944, 44, fig. 34, and MARÓT, 1960, pl. XIII).

b) Last, some important heavenly bodies were also endowed with wings by the imagination of the ancients: for example, the Homeric hymn to Selene begins asking the Muses to "sing the long-winged Moon"; Critias alluded to the Great and Little Bears "with the swing of their quick-wandering wings"; Ion endowed the planet Venus with a white wing, and Euripides mentioned the quick wing of the Sun: cf. respectively *Homeric Hymn to Selene*, v. 1; Critias, fr. 3, in SNELL, 1986, 173; Ion, fr. 6, in PAGE, 1967, 385, and Euripides, *Ion*, v. 123.

52. Vid. Aristoxenus, fr. 26, in WEHRLI, 1945, 15, and CRAMER, 1836, I, 172. Cf. Cicero, *Tusculanae*, IV, 3, and Quintilianus, IX, 4, 12.

53. That is, Pythagoras.

54. A musical harmony was held to exist (or to must exist) among the faculties of the soul; cf. Plato, *Republic*, 443 c-d; Plutarch, *Platonic Inquiries*, 1007e, and Proclus, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, in KROLL, 1899-1901, I, 212-3.

opposites, grieves and angers, pities and wicked jealousies and fears, yearnings of all sorts, desires, appetencies, conceits, slacknesses and violences, since he redirected everyone of them towards virtue by means of the appropriate tunes, as if they were like a kind of mixed and saving medicines. (15.65) And, when his pupils went to sleep in the evening, he diverted them from the troubles of the day and tumults, and he thoroughly purged the intellectual and left it completely washed over, and he caused their sleep to be quiet and with auspicious, even divinatory dreams. And when they got up again from the bed, he delivered them from the nightly torpor and faintness and laziness by means of some peculiar songs and modulations made by simple combination, with the lyre or the voice. But the man did not yet arrange and provide such things for himself likewise, by means of instruments or physical voice-organs, but experiencing a certain divinity that cannot be expressed and is hard to understand he fixed steadfastly on his ears and applied his mind to the harmonies of the cosmos. For, according to him, he only listened to and perceived the universal harmony and concord of the spheres and of the stars moving through them, the harmony which produces a strain fuller and more complete than that of the mortals by means of the movement and revolution rendered the most melodious and at the same time the most variously beautiful from the dissimilar and variously different rushing movements and velocities, magnitudes and positions that are arranged in relation to one another in a very harmonious proportion. (15.66) And, irrigated with such harmony, as if he were reduced to order with respect to the reason of his mind and, so to say, trained with respect to his body, he contrived to offer some images of those things to his pupils, as much as he could, faithfully imitating them by means of instruments and of the bare physical voice-organs. For he believed that the cosmic sounds were intelligible and within hearing only for him among all human beings on earth, and he considered worthwhile for him to learn something from its natural source and root itself, and examine it closely and become like it by aiming at an imitation of the celestial things, perhaps because he was the only one so successfully provided with organs by the divinity who fathered him.⁵⁵

Now this idea of the cathartic power of music having its ground in the imitation of cosmic music is suggested for the first time in a passage of Plato's *Timaeus*:

(47b) God devised and bestowed upon us vision to the end that we might behold the revolutions of Reason in the Heaven and use them for the revolvings of the reasoning that is within us, these being akin to those, (47c) the perturbable to the imperturbable; and that, through learning and sharing in calculations which are correct by their nature, by imitation of the absolutely unvarying revolutions of the God we might stabilize the variable revolutions within ourselves. Concerning sound also and hearing, once more we make the same declaration, that they were bestowed by the Gods with the same object and for the same reasons; for it was for these same purposes that speech was ordained, and it makes the greatest contribution thereto; music too, in so far as it uses audible sound, (47d) was bestowed for the sake of harmony. And harmony, which has motions akin to the revolutions of the Soul within us, was given by the Muses to him who makes intelligent use of the Muses, not as an aid to irrational pleasure, as is now supposed, but as an auxiliary to the inner revolution of the Soul, when it has lost its harmony, to assist in restoring it to order and concord with itself.⁵⁶

55. Cf. Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, 15, 64-66. Transl. by the author with some details taken from GODWIN, 1986, 26-7, and GUTHRIE, 1987, 72.

56. Plato, *Timaeus*, 47b-d, transl. by LAMB, 1925, quoted from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0180&layout=&loc=Tim.+47b>, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0180;query=section%3D%23485;loc=Tim.%2047b>, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0180&query=section%3D%23486&layout=&loc=Tim.%2047c>, as consulted on October 4th 2005.

When Plato says that "sound of the same object and for the same purpose" about vision: this was a gift of Reason in the Heaven and to us, these being akin to those of learning and sharing in calculations of the absolutely unvarying revolutions within ourselves. passage, and it can be assumed

A musical catharsis was the model in the music of the spheres of the whole human kind through that of the cosmos,⁵⁸ in order to The following verses describe

Он⁶⁰ – созерцание гармоничности
И всеединства мира сего

А мир – роскошный

Его различных голосов
Земные истины созвучны
А с ними истины небесные
Слились в аккорды полные
Из струн исторгнутых
Ему грядущие мгновения
Несут созвучий новый

Он весь – святое упоение
Своей божественной игрой
И под десницею божественной
Послушна каждая струна
На солнце – лире гимн
Играет пламени волна
Все напряженной струны
Все глубже смотрит в даль

57. Cf. COOPER, 1935, 112 and MATILDE, 1991, 116. and its transformation into something

58. Cf. VERDI, 1991, 116.

59. Cf. VERDI, 1991, 75-7.

60. The subject of this sentence is music (in this verse), that is, the world (or the universe)

61. "He," according to Morrison's translation, referring to "my world" or "my person" and this may be the cause of the argument. The subject cannot be God, because

s and fears, yearnings of all sorts, since he redirected everyone of s if they were like a kind of mixed ent to sleep in the evening, he , and he thoroughly purged the used their sleep to be quiet and y got up again from the bed, he and laziness by means of some ation, with the lyre or the voice. for himself likewise, by means of a certain divinity that cannot be on his ears and applied his mind he only listened to and perceived the stars moving through them, plete than that of the mortals by t melodious and at the same time d variously different rushing t are arranged in relation to one rigrated with such harmony, as if mind and, so to say, trained with of those things to his pupils, as of instruments and of the bare unds were intelligible and within d he considered worthwhile for itself, and examine it closely and ngs, perhaps because he was the nity who fathered him.⁵⁵

ts ground in the imitation of of Plato's *Timaeus*:

end that we might behold the revolvings of the reasoning that bable to the imperturbable; and are correct by their nature, by e God we might stabilize the also and hearing, once more we the Gods with the same object poses that speech was ordained, too, in so far as it uses audible d harmony, which has motions y the Muses to him who makes pleasure, as is now supposed, when it has lost its harmony, to

When Plato says that "sound ... and hearing ... were bestowed by the Gods with the same object and for the same reasons," he is obviously alluding to what he has said about vision: this was a gift of the gods "to the end that we might behold the revolutions of Reason in the Heaven and use them for the revolvings of the reasoning that is within us, these being akin to those, the perturbable to the imperturbable; and that, through learning and sharing in calculations which are correct by their nature, by imitation of the absolutely unvarying revolutions of the God we might stabilize the variable revolutions within ourselves." The reference to heavenly motions is evident in this passage, and it can be assumed in the continuation about sound and hearing as well.

A musical catharsis was the main goal of Scriabin, who aimed at a transformation of the whole human kind through his masterwork.⁵⁷ And, since human music has its model in the music of the spheres, the music for the *Mystery* should be in harmony with that of the cosmos,⁵⁸ in order to be the most adequate to enact that supreme catharsis.⁵⁹ The following verses describe what would be the glorious music of the *Mystery*:

Он⁶⁰ – созерцание гармонии
И всеединства мира снов

А мир – роскошная симфония

Его различных голосов
Земные истины созвучные
А с ними истины небес
Слились в аккорды полнозвучные
Из струн исторгнутых чудес
Ему грядущие мгновения
Несут созвучий новый строй

Он весь – святое упоение
Своей божественной игрой
И под десницею божественной
Послушна каждая струна
На солнце – лире гимн торжественный
Играет пламени волна
Все напряженной струны лирные
Все глубже смотрит в душу взор

He⁶¹ is the contemplation of harmony
And of the all-unity of the world of
dreams

And the world is a splendid
symphony

Of his various voices
Earthly consonant truths
And heavenly truths
Combined in sonorous chords
Of wonders emanating from strings
The coming moments
Bring a new order of consonance to
him

He is engulfed in holy ecstasy
By his divine playing
And each dutiful string
Is under his divine right hand
A flaming wave performs
A solemn hymn on the sun lyre
Ever tighter the lyre strings
Ever deeper the glance into the soul

57. Cf. COOPER, 1935, 112 and MATLAW, 1979, 19: Scriabin aimed at the "end of life and civilization as it exists and its transformation into something higher;" the *Prefatory Action* "was to lead to a spiritual catharsis."

58. Cf. VERDI, 1991, 116.

59. Cf. VERDI, 1991, 75-7.

60. The subject of this sentence is мой мир, "my world" or "my peace" (mentioned in the strophe before this verse), that is, the world (or peace) of the prophet who delivers these verses.

61. "He," according to Morrison's translation; but we think that the pronoun should be "it" in English, referring to "my world" or "my peace" (the word for "world" and "peace," мир, is masculine in Russian, and this may be the cause of the appearance of the masculine form of the pronoun in the English version). The subject cannot be God, because the previous strophes convey the prophet's rebellion against Him.

До дна испейте чаши пирные
Звучи, светися, звездный хор.⁶²

Empty the ceremonial chalices
Sound, shine, starry chorus.⁶³

Even the stones for the temple where the *Mystery* was to be performed and enacted, would take their origin from the fiery strings of the sun-lyre, according to the following verses:

Стены храма как гимны свободе горят

The walls of the cathedral burn as
hymns to freedom

И сверкает столпов ослепительный ряд.

And the dazzling row of columns
sparkle.

Каждый камень волшебнo-поющей звездой
Со струны солнце-лирной упал огневой.

Each stone, as a magical singing star
Fell from a burning string of the sun
lyre.

Он блаженно упал
Как звенящий кристал
Как сверкающий звук

It blissfully fell
Like chiming crystal
Like sparkling sound
Full of sweet torments.⁶⁰

Полный сладостных мук.⁵⁹

And it would be that celestial instrument, the sun lyre, which would put an end to the *Mystery*, and, accordingly, to the current state of the human kind. The last sound of the sun lyre would dissolve the audience, which would awaken in heaven:

В этом последнем звучии лирном
Все мы растаем в вихре эфирном

Into this final lyre-consonance
We will all dissolve in the ethereal
whirlwind

Родимся в вихр!
Проснемся в небо!⁶⁶

We will be born in the whirlwind!
We will awaken in heaven!⁶⁷

This represents an extreme development of ancient beliefs. The ancient writers attributed a cathartic effect to music played on a lyre, and they even held that such music helps the soul to reach heaven after death, because it imitates the music of the spheres⁶⁸; but, so far

as we know, nobody stated the way to a new and better one. A blend of a cosmogony in which that includes the ancient belief work in the noblest part of the imitating the harmony of the spheres to a higher life.

VI. Getting into Scriabin

We have seen that such ideas and that later writers attribute to Scriabin was an assiduous reader and that one of Plato's dialogues, paper, was very often read by Scriabin that are not directly formulations of which can be (etc.), as we have seen. We do French, or German, the language also take into account the points indirect ways: for example, the Vyacheslav Ivanov (who was a philosophical lectures by Sergey T. handbooks about the history of

A thorough research of Scriabin of the books preserved in the library than that of this paper, but with the works of Plato:

62. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 229.

63. Cf. MORRISON, 2002, 341.

64. Cf. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 232.

65. Cf. MORRISON, 2002, 344-5.

66. SRIABIN, 1913-14, 234.

67. MORRISON, 2002, 347.

68. A. Cathartic effect of lyre-music: from Homer, *Iliad*, IX, 186-9, to Ps. Plutarch, *On Music*, 1145 d-e, among many other sources; cf. MOLINA MORENO, 1998, 319-339.

B. Souls can reach heaven after death with the help of lyre-music: Cicero, *Republic*, VI, 18, and a marginal note to Vergil, *Aeneid*, VI, 119, only discovered and published in 1925; cf. SAVAGE, 1925, 229; NOCK, 1927 and 1929; WEST, 1983, 29 ff.; PATERLINI, 1992; BREGLIA PULCI DORIA, 1994, 74; MOLINA MORENO, 1998, 412-40; BERNABÉ, 2000, 66, and by the same, "Otras obras fragmentarias," to be published in BERNABÉ & CASADESÚS (eds.): *Orfeo y el orfismo: un reencuentro*.

C. Lyre-music being an imitation of the music of the spheres: Varro of Atax, fr. 11, in MOREL, BÜCHNER, & BLÄNSDORF, 1995, 235 (= fr. 14, in MOREL, 1927, 97); Alexander of Ephesus, fr. 21 in LLOYD-JONES & PARSONS, 1983, 10; Cicero, *Republic*, VI, 18; Philo of Alexandria, *De opificio mundi*, 126; Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Enchiridion*, 3, in JAN, 1895, 241-2; Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Theologumena arithmetica*, in DE FALCO, 1922, 71, lines 14-18; Quintilianus, I, 10, 12; Ps. Lucianus, *On astrology*, X; Servius, *Commentary on Vergil's Aeneid*, VI, 645; Servius, *Commentary on Vergil's Bucolics*, VIII, 75; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I, 19, 15, and the marginal note to Vergil, *Aeneid*, VI, 119, mentioned in the previous note.

69. Vid. KELKEL, 1974, 72 and VE

70. BOWERS, 1996, 124, and KEL Moscow Cadet Corps.

71. KELKEL, 1974, 72, lists, among *Introduction à la philosophie; Geschichte der neuen Philosophie* of April 3rd -16th- 1904; cf. KEL

72. It seems that Scriabin's library 1996, 87: "So, the Scriabin apparatus restored exactly as it had been score of Debussy's *La Mer* 'decadents,' the symbolist poet TOMPAKOVA, 1990, 18, mentioned by Friedrich Ueberweg; *Emm* a treatise on Indian yoga by *Philosophy*, by Friedrich Engels Balmont."

ty the ceremonial chalices
d, shine, starry chorus.⁶³

be performed and enacted, would
according to the following verses:

valls of the cathedral burn as
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stone, as a magical singing star
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which would put an end to the
nan kind. The last sound of the
ken in heaven:

is final lyre-consonance
l all dissolve in the ethereal
lwind

be born in the whirlwind!
awaken in heaven!⁶⁷

. The ancient writers attributed
held that such music helps the
music of the spheres⁶⁸; but, so far

as we know, nobody stated that lyre-music could dissolve the current world and give way to a new and better one. Anyway, in the poem of Scriabin we find a quite consistent blend of a cosmogony in which sonic phenomena play an important role, a cosmology that includes the ancient belief in cosmic music, a psychology in which music is also at work in the noblest part of the human soul, and a doctrine of salvation in which music, imitating the harmony of the spheres, can purify the spoiled human kind and raise it to a higher life.

VI. Getting into Scriabin's Library

We have seen that such ideas about cosmic music had their roots in the works of Plato, and that later writers attributed them to the followers of Pythagoras. Now we know that Scriabin was an assiduous reader of Plato, translated into Russian by Vladimir Soloviov, and that one of Plato's dialogues, the *Timaeus*, which we have quoted several times in this paper, was very often read by the composer.⁶⁹ But there are many ideas in the poem of Scriabin that are not directly attested in the writings of Plato, but the most explicit formulations of which can be found in the works of later authors (Iamblichus, Plutarch, etc.), as we have seen. We do not know of any translation of such works into Russian, French, or German, the languages in which Scriabin could have read them.⁷⁰ We should also take into account the possibility of Scriabin getting acquainted with such ideas by indirect ways: for example, through conversations with his friend the Symbolist poet Vyacheslav Ivanov (who was an accomplished Classical scholar as well), through philosophical lectures by Sergey Trubetskoy, or through his own readings of Schopenhauer, of handbooks about the history of philosophy,⁷¹ and of theosophical literature.

A thorough research of Scriabin's sources, which would require a close examination of the books preserved in the Scriabin Museum at Moscow,⁷² might demand more space than that of this paper, but we can offer a pair of examples of ideas he could not find in the works of Plato:

69. Vid. KELKEL, 1974, 72 and VERDI, 1991, 116.

70. BOWERS, 1996, 124, and KELKEL, 1999, 34, attest that Scriabin studied French and German in the Moscow Cadet Corps.

71. KELKEL, 1974, 72, lists, among Scriabin's readings in philosophy, the following titles: Paulsen, J., *Introduction à la philosophie*; Windelband, *Geschichte der neuen Philosophie*, and Ueberweg-Heinze, *Geschichte der neuen Philosophie* (Scriabin advises his pupil Morozova to use this handbook, in a letter of April 3rd -16th- 1904; cf. KASHPEROV, 1965, 307-8).

72. It seems that Scriabin's library is preserved as it was during the composer's last years; cf. BOWERS, 1996, 87: "So, the Scriabin apartment was designated a museum in 1922. As a State Museum it was restored exactly as it had been in Scriabin's lifetime. [...] Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* (in French), the score of Debussy's *La Mer* [...], Strauss's *Heldenleben*, volumes of autographed poetry from the 'decadents,' the symbolist poets, books of philosophy were repurchased and returned to the bookcases." TOMPAKOVA, 1990, 18, mentions Plato's works, Spinoza's *Ethics*; *A History of New Philosophy*, by Friedrich Ueberweg; *Emmanuel Kant*, by Fischer; *The World as Will and Idea*, by Schopenhauer; a treatise on Indian yoga by Ramacharan; *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, by Friedrich Engels, and collections of verses by Vyacheslav Ivanov and Konstantin Balmont."

Ps. Plutarch, *On Music*, 1145 d-e,

zero, *Republic*, VI, 18, and a marginal
925; cf. SAVAGE, 1925, 229; NOCK,
PULCI DORIA, 1994, 74; MOLINA
"Otras obras fragmentarias," to be
un reencuentro.

Atax, fr. 11, in MOREL, BÜCHNER,
of Ephesus, fr. 21 in LLOYD-JONES
De opificio mundi, 126; Nicomachus
a, *Theologumena arithmetica*, in DE
astrology, X; Servius, *Commentary on*
75; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I, 19, 15,
previous note.

- a) The image of the Sun's lyre was not alien to Symbolist art: on the cover of the score of *Prométhée, le Poème du Feu*, we can see a lyre of which the arms and strings stretch through an image of the Sun, and it would be worthwhile to look for other examples in Symbolist art and literature.⁷³
- b) The idea of the world arising from a sound vibration is alien to ancient Greek cosmogonies, and there are only scanty allusions to sonic phenomena in some fragments of cosmogonies attributed to the mythical Orpheus; but such sonic phenomena do not generate the universe, and the fragments where they are alluded to were quoted by Neoplatonic philosophers unknown, in all likelihood, to Scriabin.⁷⁴ With respect to Plato, in the *Timaeus*, it is described how the Demiurge structured the soul of the world according to number proportions that match those of the intervals of a diatonic scale like the one defined by Philolaus.⁷⁵ But Scriabin does not employ such mathematical models in his poem. We can, however, trace one of the sources from where our composer-poet could take the idea of the cosmogonic sound: Mme. Blavatsky's inaccurate account of the Greek doctrines about cosmic harmony: in *The Secret Doctrine*, after alluding to the harmony of the spheres in terms suggesting the acquaintance with Plato and some other ancient authors, Mme. Blavatsky, without any ground on Greek or Latin sources, attributes to Pythagoras the notion of sound being what allowed the transition from chaos to cosmos.⁷⁶ Actually, whereas the doctrine of the harmony of the spheres has been connected with the Pythagoreans (according to the most ancient sources, the writings of Aristotle), we do not know any source attributing them such a notion of a sound that can generate the whole universe. This idea is alien to ancient Greek thought, and it is most likely that Scriabin was indebted to Indian cosmogonies, which he could know through his readings on theosophy or about ancient India.⁷⁷

We shall devote further inquiries to the influences of Symbolist poets, of theosophists, and of Indian thought on the text of the *Prefatory Action*. In any event, it is obvious that Scriabin, having taken as his point of departure the doctrines of Plato about cosmic harmony, had developed them – partly on his own, partly through other influences – in ways which strikingly resembled those of other ancient poets and philosophers, whose work he doubtfully knew, but whose main source had been Plato, just like that of Scriabin himself.

73. Cf. plate on CASSOU, 1998, 303 of the Russian edition.

74. About cosmogonies in which the world arises from sound, cf., for example, SCHNEIDER, 1964, and NICKLAUS, 1993. Concerning the sound's role in Orphic cosmogonies, cf. MOLINA MORENO, "El orfismo y la música," to be published in BERNABÉ & CASADESÚS (eds.): *Orfeo y el orfismo: un reencuentro*.

75. Vid. Plato, *Timaeus*, 35b – 36d, for the number proportions of the soul of the world; cf. the number proportions of the diatonic scale described by Philolaus, fr. 6, in HUFFMAN, 1993, 145-7. Those proportions are best explained in a fragment by Aristotle, cf. GIGON, 1987, 413; cf. also Gaudentius, in JAN, 1895, 340-1. Pythagoras was held to be the discoverer of such proportions, according to Xenokrates (fourth-third centuries B. C. E.); cf. ISNARDI-PARENTE, 1982, 83-5, and 191-3.

76. Cf. BLAVATSKY, 1888, I, 433, corresponding to the first book, second section, twelfth chapter.

77. KELKEL, 1974, 72, mentions Barth's *La religion en Inde*; Arnold's *Les lumières de l'Asie*, and Balmont's *Vie de Buddha*, among the books owned by Scriabin. We wonder whether the author of the *Vie de Buddha* was the poet Konstantin Bal'mont. On some affinities between Scriabin and the *Bhagavad-Gita*, cf. MOLINA-MORENO, 2004, 228-9.

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